

Remarks

Claims 1-8 are pending in the application. Reconsideration and re-examination of the application is respectfully requested for the reasons set forth herein.

1. The Examiner has rejected claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP Patent Publication 09238423 issued to Shuichi.

Claim 1 states that the heat-shrink tube for the electrical power cable comprises “a sleeve having an electrically insulating inner layer, an electrically conductive outer layer, and between the inner and outer layers a thermoplastic mid-layer which is softenable by application of heat to the sleeve to permit dimensional recovery thereof, the sleeve being of tubular, one-piece construction....” The heat shrink tube of claim 1 therefore requires *a three layer sleeve formed in one-piece* wherein the layers *include* an electrically insulating inner layer, an electrically conductive outer layer, and a thermoplastic mid-layer arranged there between which is softenable by application of heat to the sleeve.

The Examiner has identified the contraction tube 20, 30, 12 of Shuichi as the sleeve of the claimed invention. In Shuichi, Shuichi teaches several separate embodiments of contraction tubes. Specifically, Shuichi teaches a contraction tube 20 having two layers in Figure 1, a contraction tube 30 having three layers consisting of an inner layer 31 and an outer layer 33 which are semi-conductive in Figure 2, and a contraction tube 12 consisting of a single layer in Figure 4. None of the aforementioned contraction tubes 20, 30, 12 cited by the Examiner require *a three layer sleeve formed in one-piece* wherein the layers *include* an electrically insulating inner layer, an electrically conductive outer layer, and a thermoplastic mid-layer arranged there

between. Shuichi therefore does not teach or suggest all of the elements of the claimed invention.

Additionally, in Figure 4, Shuichi teaches two separate half-conductivity contraction tubes 10, 11 that electrically connect two power cables 1a, 1b. Each of the power cables 1a, 1b has a conductor 2, covered with an internal semi-conducting layer 3, covered with an insulator 4, and a semi-conducting layer 5. The half-conductivity contraction tube 10 connects the internal semi-conducting layers 3 of the power cables 1a, 1b, and the half-conductivity contraction tube 11 connects the external semi-conducting layers 5 of the power cables 1a, 1b. The Examiner therefore has incorrectly identified the insulator 4 of the power cables 1a, 1b as a layer of the sleeve of the claimed invention. Additionally, neither of the half-conductivity contraction tubes 10, 11 has *three layers formed in one-piece* wherein the layers *include* an electrically insulating inner layer, an electrically conductive outer layer, and a thermoplastic mid-layer arranged there between. Shuichi therefore does not teach or suggest all of the elements of the claimed invention.

Because Shuichi does not teach or suggest all of the elements of the claimed invention, the Examiner has failed to set forth a prima facie case of obviousness. Removal of the rejection of claim 1 is therefore respectfully requested. Further, claims 2-8 depend from independent claim 1. Because Shuichi does not teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 1 for the aforementioned reasons, Shuichi also does not teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 2-8. Removal of the rejection of claims 2-8 is therefore also respectfully requested.

In view of the arguments presented herein, the application is considered to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and passage to issue is respectfully requested. If the

Examiner has any questions or needs further clarification, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Mae Slonaker", written over a horizontal line.

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